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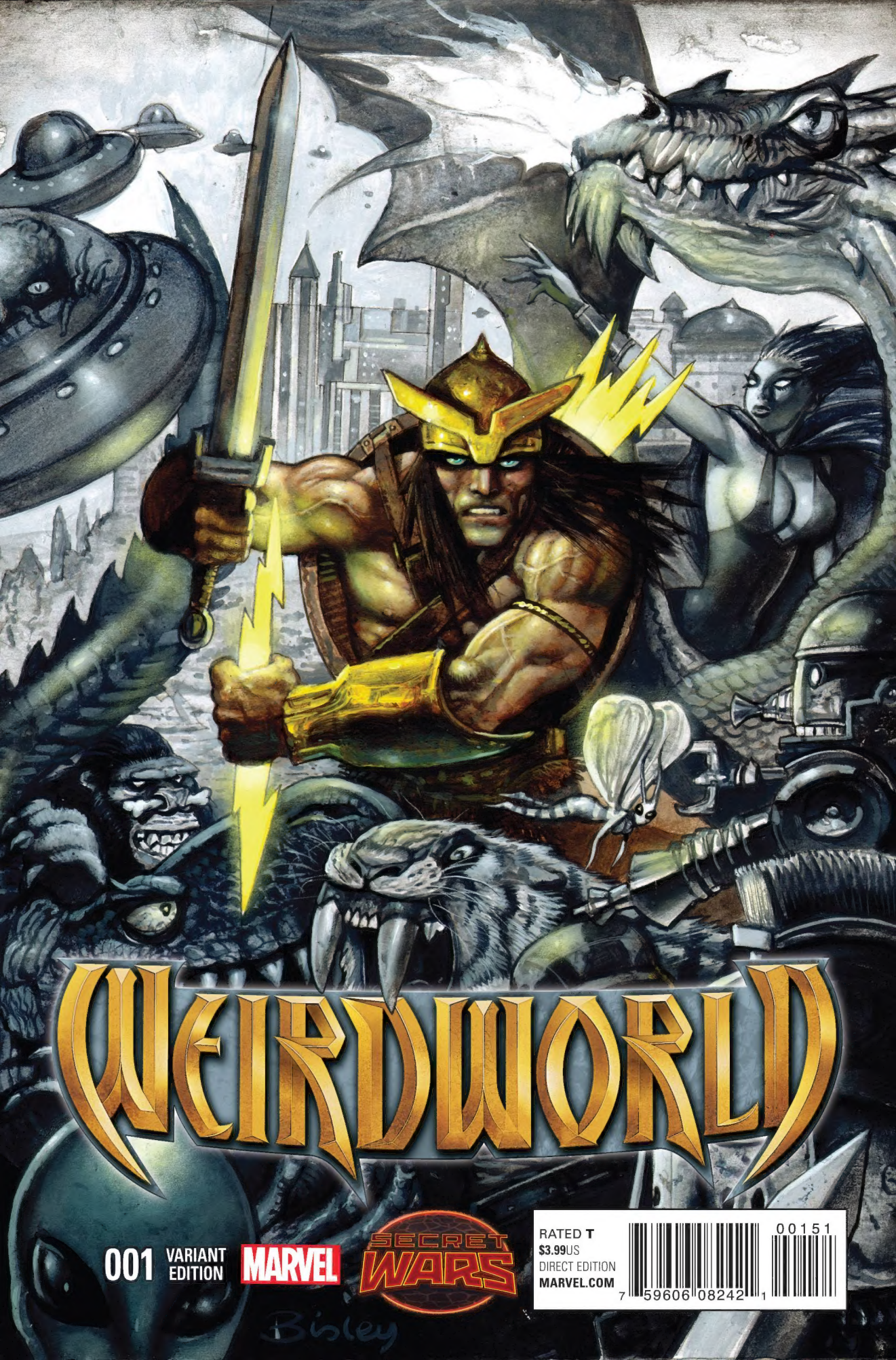
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THE MULTIVERSE WAS DESTROYED!

•

THE HEROES OF EARTH-616 AND EARTH-1610 WERE POWERLESS TO SAVE IT!

•

NOW, ALL THAT REMAINS...IS **BATTLEWORLD:**

A MASSIVE, PATCHWORK PLANET COMPOSED OF THE FRAGMENTS OF WORLDS THAT NO LONGER EXIST, MAINTAINED BY THE IRON WILL OF ITS GOD AND MASTER, VICTOR VON DOOM!

•

EACH REGION IS A DOMAIN UNTO ITSELF!

WEIRDWORLD

• WHERE LOST THINGS GO •

WRITER:
JASON AARON

ARTIST:
MIKE DEL MUNDO

COLORS:
MIKE DEL MUNDO & MARCO D'ALFONSO

LETTERER
VC's CORY PETIT

COVER ARTIST:
MIKE DEL MUNDO

VARIANT COVER ARTISTS:
SIMON BISLEY; STEVE EPTING; JENNY FRISON; SKOTTIE YOUNG; DAVE JOHNSON; MIKE DEL MUNDO

ASST. EDITORS:
JON MOISAN & ALANNA SMITH

EDITORS:
TOM BREVOORT WITH WIL MOSS

EDITOR IN CHIEF:
AXEL ALONSO

CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER:
JOE QUESADA

PUBLISHER:
DAN BUCKLEY

EXEC. PRODUCER:
ALAN FINE

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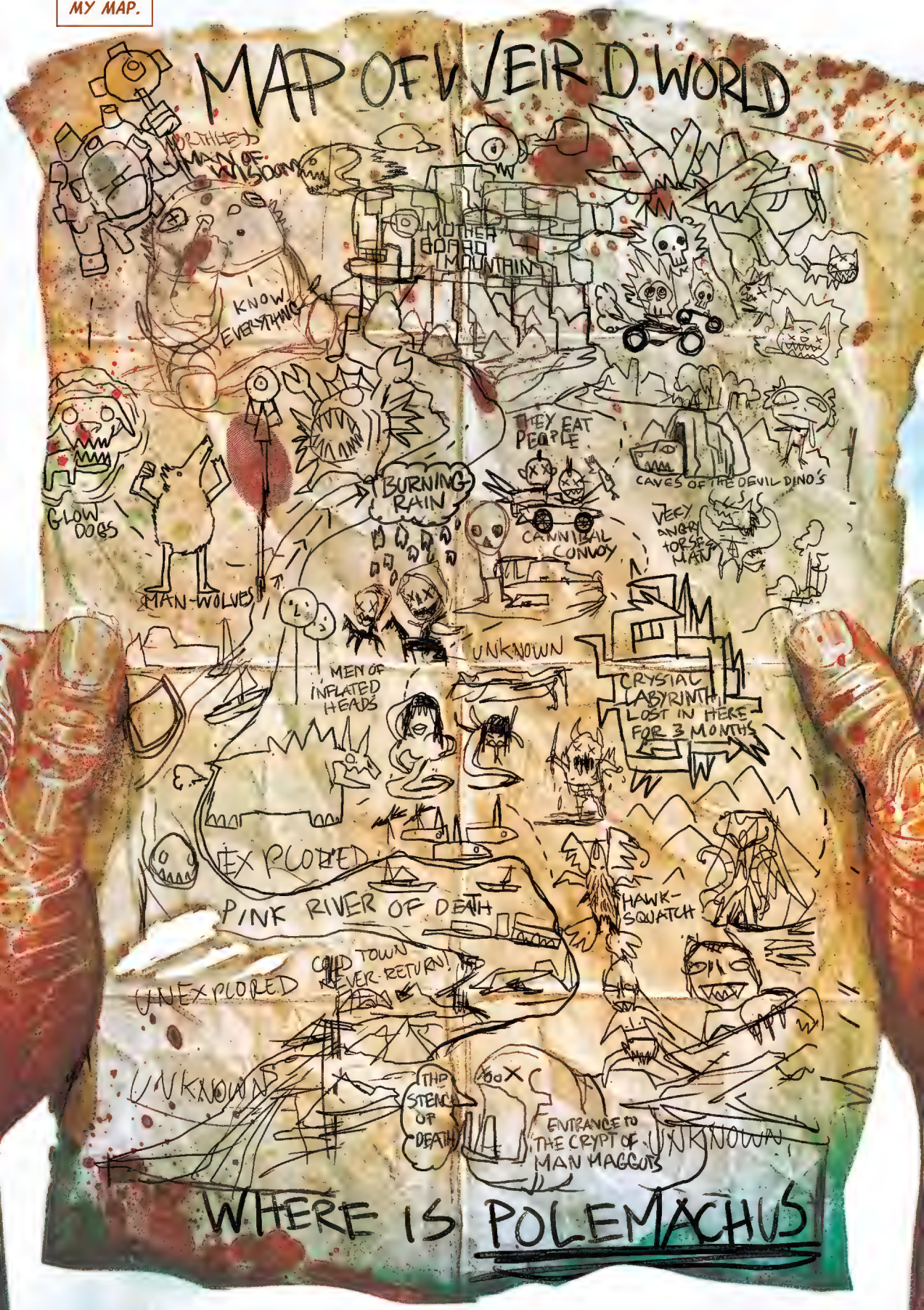
I WILL *FIND* IT.
NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES.
NO MATTER WHO OR WHAT I HAVE TO KILL.
I WILL FIND *POLEMACHUS.*
I WILL FIND MY WAY *HOME.*
SO SWEARS *ARKON,* LORD OF THE WARLORDS.
ARKON THE MAGNIFICENT.
ARKON THE UTTERLY *LOST.*

BACK INTO THE DEPTHS WITH YOU, DEVILFISH! THE FLESH OF ARKON SHALL NOT BE YOUR FEAST!
I HAVE RIDDEN THIS RIVER FOR DAYS. I KNOW NOT WHERE IT IS HEADED. I KNOW NOT WHAT LIES AROUND THE BEND.
SO FAR TODAY, THERE HAVE BEEN SWARMS OF FLYING SPIDERS, A TRIBE OF HEADHUNTERS IN CANOES MADE OF SKINNED HUMAN FACES, AND NOW A PACK OF GIANT SQUIDSHARKS.
YESTERDAY IS LITTLE MORE THAN A BLUR. AS ARE ALL THE DAYS THAT CAME BEFORE IT.
A BLUR OF BLOOD AND HUNGER AND HORROR. OF ENDLESS HOURS WANDERING LOST IN A WORLD I CANNOT EXPLAIN.
I CANNOT SAY WHERE I AM OR WHERE I AM GOING. BUT I KNOW WHERE I BELONG. AND I WILL NOT STOP UNTIL I RETURN THERE.
I WILL NOT REST UNTIL...
SACRED RINGS OF FIRE...
WATERFALL!
NO, NOT A MERE WATERFALL. THAT WOULD BE FAR TOO SIMPLE, TOO NORMAL.
AND AS I HAVE LEARNED TIME AND TIME AGAIN, NOTHING IS EVER NORMAL...

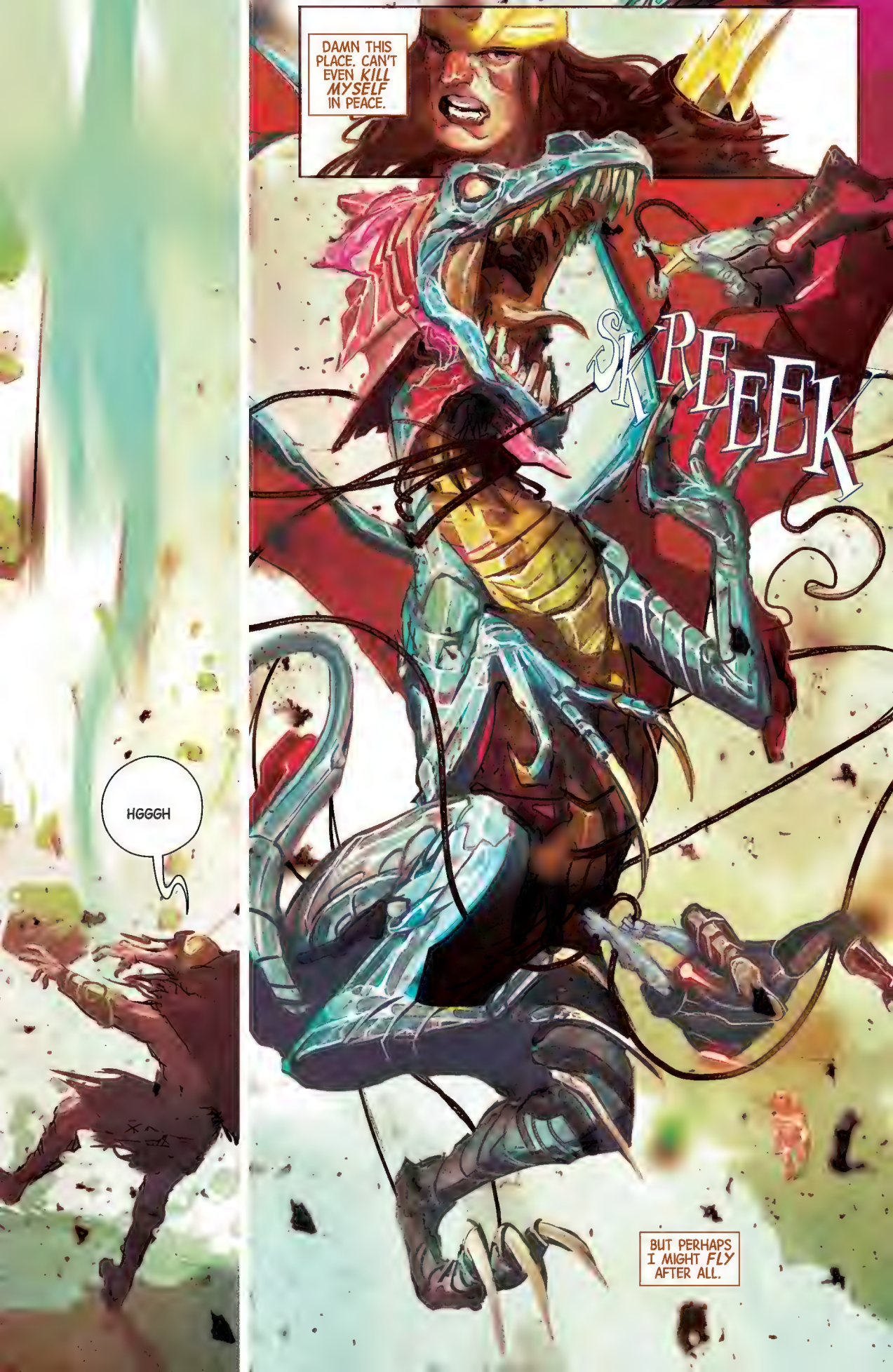
...HERE IN WEIRDWORLD.
THIS...
...IS IMPOSSIBLE.
AN ISLAND.
IT'S A DAMNED FLOATING ISLAND.
I HAVE WALKED AND CRAWLED ACROSS THIS LAND FOR MORE DAYS THAN I CAN FATHOM AND SEEN SIGHTS THAT DEFY EVEN THE MOST DEMENTED IMAGINATION.
I HAVE SPILLED ENOUGH BLOOD TO DROWN A LESSER MAN A THOUSAND TIMES OVER.
I HAVE DONE THINGS TO SURVIVE OF WHICH I NEVER DREAMED MYSELF CAPABLE.
BUT NOW I DO SOMETHING I HAVE NEVER DONE BEFORE--

DOOM TAKE MY EYES.
--I WEEP.
I KNOW HOW TO FIGHT AND KILL. WITH SWORD OR AXE OR BATTLE-BOLT. WITH MY HANDS AND TEETH IF NEED BE.
I HAVE BEEN RAISED TO DO THOSE THINGS SINCE BIRTH. BUT HOW DOES ONE EVISCERATE DESPAIR? HOW DO YOU STRANGLE HOPELESSNESS?
IN POLEMACHUS, I WAS A KING. A CONQUEROR.
I HAD A CASTLE FILLED WITH PLUNDERED TREASURE. A HAREM OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN. AN ARMY OF BARBARIANS WHO BOWED AT MY FEET.
NOW ALL I HAVE ARE THE RAGS I WEAR ON MY BACK. AND WHATEVER TATTERED SHREDS OF SANITY I STILL CLING TO.
AND THIS. MY MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION.

MY MAP.


MAP OF WEIRD WORLD
MAN OF WISDOM
MOTHER BOARD MOUNTAIN
KNOW EVERYTHING
GLOW DOGS
BURNING RAIN
THEY EAT PEOPLE
CAVES OF THE DEVIL DINO'S
CANNIBAL CONVOY
VERY ANGRY TORSO MAN
MAN-WOLVES
UNKNOWN
MEN OF INFLATED HEADS
CRYSTAL LABYRINTH LOST IN HERE FOR 3 MONTHS
EXPLORED
PINK RIVER OF DEATH
HAWK-SQUATCH
COLD TOWN NEVER RETURN!
UNEXPLORED
UNKNOWN
THE STENCH OF DEATH
ENTRANCE TO THE CRYPT OF MAN MAGGOTS
UNKNOWN
WHERE IS POLEMACHUS

I WALK AND I SURVIVE AND I MAKE THE MAP.
AND SOMETIMES WHEN I FALL AND CANNOT RISE AGAIN, I SLEEP AND DREAM OF HOME.
THAT IS ALL I DO. SOME DAYS IT FEELS LIKE THAT IS ALL I HAVE EVER DONE.
I WALK AND WALK AND KILL AND WALK AND...
WHAT IF I WERE TO TAKE...
...BUT ONE MORE STEP?
ONE MORE STEP WOULD MEAN NO MORE WALKING. NO MORE WANDERING LOST.
ONE MORE STEP...
...AND I COULD FLY.
ALL THE WAY TO--
SKREEEEK


DAMN THIS PLACE. CAN'T EVEN *KILL MYSELF* IN PEACE.
SKREEEK
HGGGH
BUT PERHAPS I MIGHT *FLY* AFTER ALL.

THIS WAS A TERRIBLE IDEA! WE'LL NEVER BRING THIS THING DOWN!
IF WE DON'T, THE WITCH WILL HAVE US BOILED IN THE BLOOD OF OUR CHILDREN! CLIMB UP AND RIDE THE BEAST!
YOU CLIMB UP AND RIDE IT! I'D RATHER LIVE TO SEE TOMORROW!
GWASH
GGAAAGHH!!!
I'VE KILLED MY SHARE OF OGRES BEFORE. THEY'RE MARAUDERS, MOSTLY. PRIMITIVE BEASTS. THEY USUALLY FIGHT WITH LITTLE MORE THAN STICKS AND--
BOOM

AS I SAID, NOTHING IS EVER SIMPLE HERE.
NOT EVEN DYING.
THAT LAST SHELL ALMOST HIT THE DRAGON, YOU SLUGBRAIN. WE'RE ONLY SUPPOSED TO BE SCARING IT DOWN. YOU KILL THE BEAST AND THE WITCH WILL BAKE OUR GUTS INTO A PIE AND MAKE US EAT IT.
LOAD UP ANOTHER ROUND.
THERE'S A PINKSKIN ON THE LINE! HE'S TRYING TO STEAL OUR PLUNDER!
THE PINKSKIN WEARS LIGHTNING ON ITS BACK. MIGHT BE IT'S A WIZARD.
PINKSKINS ARE PRIMITIVE THINGS. THEY USUALLY FIGHT WITH NOTHING BUT STICKS AND--
WHO CARES IF IT'S A WIZARD?! WIZARDS DIE, SAME AS ANYTHING! HIT HIM WITH THE RIPRODS!

HHRRRGH!
GO FIND YOUR OWN DRAGON, PINKSKIN! THIS ONE'S OURS!
GUN OGRES. I'LL HAVE TO ADD THOSE TO THE MAP.
IF I LIVE THAT LONG.
SHELL'S LOADED. YOU'RE READY TO FIRE.
HEH. WATCH THIS, BOYS. I'M GONNA MAKE IT RAIN PINK.
GUGGH!
CHOOM

NO! WHAT ARE YOU--
BOOOM
OH, NO. I THINK WE JUST BLEW UP GROONDOR...
THAT GOT THE DRAGON'S ATTENTION. HERE HE COMES.
MOMENTS AGO I WAS READY TO CAST MY OWN LIFE AWAY. BUT I'LL BE DAMNED IF I'M GOING TO LET THESE BASTARDS TAKE IT.
I CLAIM THIS DRAGON IN THE NAME OF POLEMACHUS! MAKE YOUR PEACE WITH DOOM, OGRES!
FOR ARKON HAS COME!
AND DEATH FLIES WITH HIM!

ON THE ROAD TO POLEMACHUS, I HAVE FOUGHT A MILLION BATTLES MUCH LIKE THIS ONE.
PERHAPS I MUST FIGHT A MILLION MORE BEFORE I AM HOME.
SO BE IT.
YOU KNOW NOT WHAT YOU FACE HERE, BARBARIAN! YOU AND ALL YOU LOVE WILL BURN AT THE HANDS OF--
I WILL NOT GIVE IN TO A WORLD OF MONSTERS.
MRRRRGH
EVEN IF I MUST BECOME ONE.

EASY, OLD GIRL. I AM NOT LIKE THOSE OTHERS.
SKRRRRK
SEE? NO MORE REINS.
I'M NOT HERE TO *TAME* YOU.
FLY WHEREVER YOU WISH, WILD ONE. ARKON HAS MERELY COME...

...TO ENJOY THE VIEW.

THE LANDSCAPE FLIES BY, SO FAST I FEEL FAINT.

A MAD MIX OF TERRAIN THAT DEFIES ALL LOGIC AND STRETCHES AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.

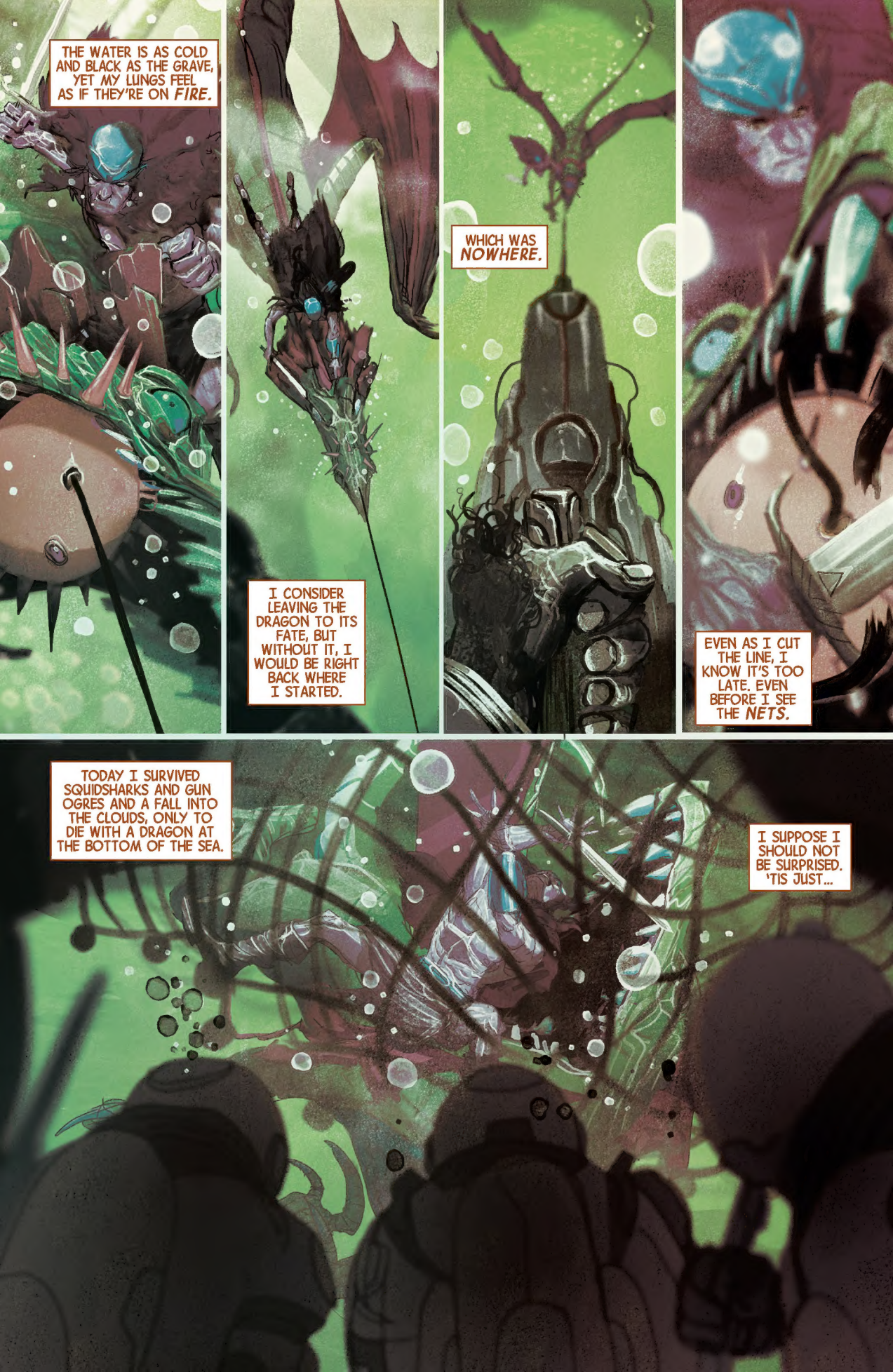
I NEVER WOULD HAVE MADE IT ON FOOT. NOT IN A THOUSAND YEARS. BUT NOW...

POLEMACHUS! I AM COMING!

YOUR IMPERION IS COMING HOME!

CHOMP

WHAT IN THE NAME OF...
WE'RE CAUGHT ON A LINE LIKE A *FISH!*
HOLD STILL, AND LET ME CUT YOU FREE!
DAMN IT, STOP YOUR ***THRASHING,*** YOU IDIOT BEAST! OR WE'LL BOTH BE...
SKRGGHHK


THE WATER IS AS COLD AND BLACK AS THE GRAVE, YET MY LUNGS FEEL AS IF THEY'RE ON *FIRE.*
I CONSIDER LEAVING THE DRAGON TO ITS FATE, BUT WITHOUT IT, I WOULD BE RIGHT BACK WHERE I STARTED.
WHICH WAS *NOWHERE.*
EVEN AS I CUT THE LINE, I KNOW IT'S TOO LATE. EVEN BEFORE I SEE THE *NETS.*
TODAY I SURVIVED SQUIDSHARKS AND GUN OGRES AND A FALL INTO THE CLOUDS, ONLY TO DIE WITH A DRAGON AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED. 'TIS JUST...

WHEN YOU DIE UNDERWATER, YOU DO NOT EXPECT IT TO BE...
...AT THE HANDS OF *APES.*
WELCOME TO *WEIRDWORLD,* YOU FOOL.
"HE SAID... HIS NAME WAS *ARKON.*"

AND HE SAID HE FOUGHT FOR A PLACE CALLED... POLEMACHUS.
THAT'S ALL I KNOW, MISTRESS. I SWEAR. I BARELY SURVIVED ARKON'S COWARDLY AMBUSH. MAY I PLEASE...JUST HAVE A DRINK OF WATER?
YOU COME CRAWLING BACK HERE WITHOUT MY DRAGON AND THEN DARE ASK ME FOR WATER? WATER YOU SHALL HAVE, MY DEAR OGRE.
HAVE HIS FAMILY DROWNED IN A BARREL OF IT. AND THEN SEE THAT HE DRINKS EVERY DROP.
MEANWHILE. ELSEWHERE IN WEIRDWORLD.
NO, MISTRESS, PLEASE!
POLEMACHUS. I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A REGION. OR OF THIS BARBARIAN WHO CALLS HIMSELF ARKON.
COULD HE BE AN ALLY OF THE MAN-THINGS AND THEIR SWAMP QUEEN? SHALL WE DISPATCH THE SLAYER?
FIND THIS PLACE CALLED POLEMACHUS AND READY THE MAGMA MEN.
WE MUST REMIND THESE SAVAGES THAT WHILE DOOM MAY STAND ALONE ABOVE ALL...
...IT IS STILL MORGAN LE FAY WHO RUNS WEIRDWORLD.
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE

ESCAPE FROM APELANTIS